

**James Madison to Edmund Pendleton, November 7, 1780. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.**

**TO EDMUND PENDLETON.<sup>1</sup>**

1 From the Madison Papers (1840).

Philadelphia, November 7, 1780.

Dear Sir, —Doctor Lee and Mr. Izard, particularly the latter, have been here sometime, and I believe are not very reserved in their reflections on the venerable philosopher at the Court of Versailles. Mr. Izard, I understand, is particularly open in his charges against him. Doctor Lee on his arrival applied to Congress for a hearing on the subject of Mr. Dean's allegations, if any doubt remained of the falsehood

and malice of them, but nothing final has been done as yet in consequence of it. I have had great anxiety lest the flame of faction, which on a former occasion proved so injurious, should be kindled anew; but, as far as I can judge, the temper of Congress is in general by no means prone to it, although there may be individuals on both sides who would both wish and endeavour it.

Congress have just finished an estimate of supplies for the ensuing year, requiring of the States the value of six millions of dollars in specie. The principal part of the requisition consists of specific articles, the residue of specie or the new emissions, receivable as specie. If the States fulfil this plan punctually, there is no doubt that we shall go smoothly through another campaign; and if they would forbear recurring to State emissions and



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certificates, in procuring the supplies, it may become a permanent and effectual mode of carrying on the war. But past experience will not permit our expectations to be very sanguine. The collection and transportation of specific supplies must necessarily be tedious and subject to casualties; and the proceedings of separate popular bodies must add greatly to the uncertainty and delay. The expense attending the mode is of itself a sufficient objection to it, if money could by any possible device be provided in due quantity. The want of

this article is the source of all our public difficulties and misfortunes. One or two millions of guineas properly applied, would diffuse vigor and satisfaction throughout the whole military departments, and would expel the enemy from every part of the United States. It would also have another good effect. It would reconcile the army and everybody else to our republican forms of government; the principal inconveniences which are imputed to them being really the fruit of defective revenues. What other States effect by money, we are obliged to pursue by dilatory and indigested expedients, which benumb all our operations, and expose our troops to numberless distresses. If these were well paid, well fed, and well clothed, they would be well satisfied, and would fight with more success. And this might and would be as well effected by our governments as by any other, if they possessed money enough, as in our moneyless situation the same embarrassments would have been experienced by any government.